

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07

COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 /069 W
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P R 090034Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7266

INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO VIA POUCH

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MS

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF ECHEVERRIA VISIT TO SAN ANTONIO

1. SUMMARY: MORNING PRESS COVERAGE SEPT 8 OF ECHEVERRIA INAUGURATION OF SAN ANTONIO TRADE FAIR STRESSED CONTENT OF HIS REMARKS, WHICH WE READ AS MODERATE, APPROPRIATE FOR OCCASION, WITH ONLY A PASSING REFERENCE TO HECKLING INCIDENT. AFTERNOON PRESS HEADLINES "APOLOGY" OFFERED BY CHICANO GROUP FOR INCIDENT, AT SAME TIME EMPHASIZING THAT WIRE SERVICES EXAGGERATED AND DISTORTED IMPORTANCE OF CHICANO JOSTLING THE PRESIDENT. AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS REPORTED ON FRONT PAGES, WITHOUT EDITORIAL COMMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. MORNING PRESS SEPTEMBER 8 VIRTUALLY IGNORED HECKLING OR JUSTLING INCIDENT WHICH WE UNDERSTOOD RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE TREATMENT BY US PAPERS AND WIRE SERVICES. PRESS HERE STRESSED SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT OF PRESIDENT'S REMARKS OPENING TRADE FAIR, WHICH WE READ AS MODERATE, APPROPRIATE FOR OCCASION.

3. APPARENTLY IN REACTION TO US WIRE SERVICE TREATMENT OF HECKLING INCIDENT, AFTERNOON PRESS HEADLINED APOLOGY TENDERED ECHEVERRIA BY CHICANO
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SPOKESMAN AND EMPHASIZED THAT WIRE SERVICE REPORTS HAD

BLOWN UP STORY OUT OF PROPORTION. MEXICAN COVERAGE DID NOT REFER TO PRISON CONDITIONS AS CAUSE OF CHICANO PROTEST. STORIES QUOTED CHICANO LEADER REIES TIJERINA AS DISAVOWING MEXICAN AMERICAN INVOLVED IN INCIDENT AS MAN WITH CRIMINAL RECORD, NOT A CHICANO LEADER. AFTERNOON PRESS ALSO PLAYED ECHEVERRIA'S APPARENTLY IMPROMPTU REMARKS EXHORTING MEXICAN AMERICANS TO RETAIN IDENTITY WITH MEXICAN HERITAGE, TO WORK FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY WITHIN US AND TO DO SO WITHIN US LAWS AND INSTITUTIONS. COMMENT: DIFFERING AFTERNOON REACTION WAS CLEARLY PROMPTED BY TREATMENT GIVEN TO INCIDENT IN US PAPERS. INCIDENT MAY GET ATTENTION FOR DAY OR SO, BUT WE DO NOT THINK IT WILL BECOME AN ISSUE. END COMMENT.

4. PRESS ALSO GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS SYMPATHETIC TO MEXICAN REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM, DOWNPLAYING LETTER OF SEVENTY-SIX CONGRESSMEN, AND EMPHASIZING CORDIAL STATE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AMONG OTHER TOPICS. AMBASSADOR APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN QUOTED ACCURATELY. PRESS HAS NOT YET EDITORIALIZED. THOMPSON

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